EMERGENCY AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVE

REGULATORY SUPPORT DIVISION
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U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

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DATE: August 11, 2000
2000-16-52

Send to all U.S. owners and operators of Eurocopter France Model AS350B3 helicopters.

This Emergency Airworthiness Directive (AD) is prompted by an in-flight loss of the tail rotor drive shaft forward fairing (fairing) heat shield on a Eurocopter France (ECF) Model AS350B3 helicopter due to cracking in the areas where the heat shield is attached to the fairing, part number 350A23-0032-09. This condition, if not corrected, could result in an in-flight loss of the heat shield, impact with tail or main rotor blades, and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter.

The Direction Generale De L'Aviation Civile (DGAC), the airworthiness authority for France, recently notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on ECF Model AS350B3 helicopters. The DGAC advised of the loss of a heat shield, which can lead to loss of control of the helicopter. The DGAC issued AD T2000-340-080(A), dated July 31, 2000, for ECF Model AS350B3 helicopters.

The FAA has reviewed Eurocopter Service Telex No. 05.00.35, undated, which describes procedures for checking and repairing the heat shield attachment areas on the fairing.

This helicopter model is manufactured in France and is type certificated for operation in the United States under the provision of 14 CFR 21.29 and the applicable bilateral airworthiness agreement. Pursuant to this bilateral airworthiness agreement, the DGAC has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above. The FAA has examined the findings of the DGAC, reviewed all available information, and determined that AD action is necessary for products of this type design that are certificated for operations in the United States.

We have identified an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on other ECF Model AS350B3 helicopters of the same type design. This AD requires, before the first flight of each day, visually inspecting the heat shield attachment areas on the fairing for a crack. The AD also requires within 50 hours time-in-service (TIS) and thereafter at intervals not to exceed 50 hours TIS, removing the fairing and inspecting the heat shield attachment areas on the fairing for a crack. If a crack is found, the AD requires replacing the fairing with an airworthy fairing.

This rule is issued under 49 U.S.C. Section 44701 pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, and is effective immediately upon receipt of this emergency AD.

2000-16-52 EUROCOPTER FRANCE: Docket No. 2000-SW-39-AD.

Applicability: Model AS350B3 helicopters with tail rotor drive shaft forward fairing (fairing), part number 350A23-0032-09, installed, certificated in any category.

NOTE 1: This AD applies to each helicopter identified in the preceding applicability provision, regardless of whether it has been otherwise modified, altered, or repaired in the area subject to the requirements of this AD. For helicopters that have been modified, altered, or repaired so that the performance of the requirements of this AD is affected, the owner/operator must request approval for an alternative method of compliance in accordance with paragraph (c) of this AD.

The request should include an assessment of the effect of the modification, alteration, or repair on the unsafe condition addressed by this AD; and if the unsafe condition has not been eliminated, the request should include specific proposed actions to address it.

Compliance: Required as indicated, unless accomplished previously.

To prevent in-flight loss of a fairing heat shield, impact with tail or main rotor blades, and subsequent loss of control of the helicopter, accomplish the following:

(a) Before the first flight of each day, visually inspect the fairing at the left and right side heat shield attachment areas (three on each side) for a crack. If a crack is found, replace the fairing with an airworthy fairing before further flight.

(b) Within 50 hours time-in-service (TIS) and thereafter at intervals not to exceed 50 hours TIS, remove the fairing and inspect the left, right, and top heat shield attachment areas (three on each side and three on top) for a crack. If a crack is found, replace the fairing with an airworthy fairing before further flight.

NOTE 2: Eurocopter Service Telex No. 05.00.35, undated, pertains to the subject of this AD.

(c) An alternative method of compliance or adjustment of the compliance time that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used if approved by the Manager, Regulations Group, Rotorcraft Directorate, FAA. Operators shall submit their requests through an FAA Principal Maintenance Inspector, who may concur or comment and then send it to the Manager, Regulations Group.

NOTE 3: Information concerning the existence of approved alternative methods of compliance with this AD, if any, may be obtained from the Regulations Group.

(d) Special flight permits will not be issued.

(e) **Emergency AD 2000-16-52, issued August 11, 2000, becomes effective upon receipt.**

NOTE 4: The subject of this AD is addressed in Direction Generale De L'Aviation Civile (France) AD T2000-340-080(A), dated July 31, 2000.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jim Grigg, Aviation Safety Engineer, FAA, Rotorcraft Directorate, Regulations Group, Fort Worth, Texas 76193-0111, telephone (817) 222-5490, fax (817) 222-5961

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on August 11, 2000.
Henry A. Armstrong, Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate, Aircraft Certification Service.